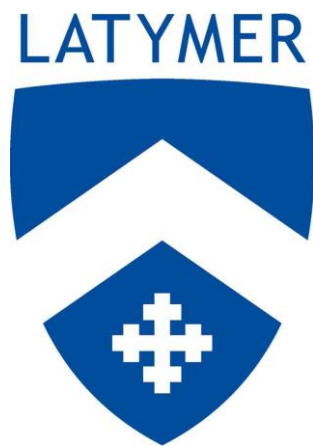


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Entrance Examination

**E N G L I S H**

Reading Material

**SAMPLE**

Read the passage that follows, then answer **ALL** the multiple choice questions in Sections A, B and C.

It is the opening of a travel book called 'The Great Hedge of India' by Roy Moxham.

## A Hedge?

*In populated parts of the country, where smuggling is rife, the men are active in preventing the passage of contraband goods by a barrier which, in its most perfect form, is utterly impassable to man or beast and all the outlets through which are guarded.*

Allan Octavian Hume, Commissioner of Inland Customs.

### Line No.s

1 On the corner of Charing Cross Road and Lichfield Street, right in the centre of London, there is a second-hand bookshop – Quinto. Its haphazard collections, often dilapidated, rarely contain anything grand. The books are cheap. A bargain is always a possibility. I first went to India in 1992, and have returned every year. As I became more interested in the country's culture and history, I started to acquire a few books. Some were new; some second-hand. I kept away from expensive antiquarian shops. Nevertheless, I occasionally found quite rare items. Quinto was a favourite haunt.

10 It was there, late in 1995, that I paid £25 for *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official*, by Major-General Sir W.H. Sleeman KCB. For a book published in 1893, and containing many lending date-stamps from Cheltenham Public Library, its two olive-green cloth volumes were in good condition. It was a lot of money for me – more than I had ever spent on a second-hand book before – but I liked the title. It was fortunate that I had neither the money, nor inclination, to buy first editions. It had always struck me as a nonsense that a first edition should be more prized than a later edition, with the errors removed and the text expanded.

20 Sleeman's book was a fascinating account of travels through India in the last decades of the Honourable East India Company's rule. It told of the author's trek across central India, leading a tour of inspection, at the head of a huge caravan of elephants and horses. There were eyewitness accounts of rajas and ranies<sup>1</sup>, of famines and battles, of religious ceremonies and widow burning, of bandits, poisoners and witchcraft. There was also a chapter on 'Transit duties in India – mode of collecting them', which dwelt on the 'insolence and rapacity<sup>2</sup> of these customs house officers', as they extracted bribes. These reflections were made as the caravan passed through a customs post at Horal, between Delhi and Agra. It seemed that goods were taxed as they entered 'British' India from the Princely States to the west. It had never occurred to me before that customs duties had been levied, hundred of miles from the coast, in the heart of India.

30 It was a quite interesting chapter. What really caught my eye, however, was a footnote. This had been appended to the original edition by an editor from the

Indian Civil Service, quoting another Indian civil servant, Lytton Strachey's father, Sir John Strachey:

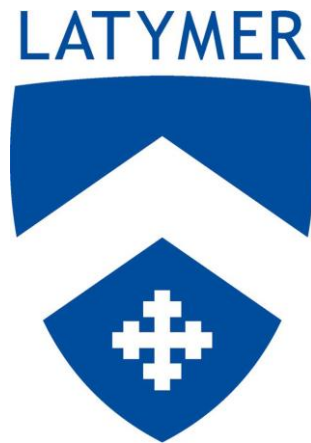
35 To secure the levy of a duty on salt . . . there grew up gradually a  
monstrous system, to which it would be almost impossible to find a  
parallel in any tolerably civilised country. A Customs line was  
established which stretched across the whole of India, which in 1869  
extended from the Indus to the Mahanadi in Madras, a distance of  
2,300 miles; and it was guarded by nearly 12,000 men . . . It  
40 would have stretched from London to Constantinople . . . It  
consisted principally of an immense impenetrable hedge of thorny  
trees and bushes.

45 A hedge? It seemed unlikely. I checked the usual histories of India, and found  
no reference to it. Surely, with the Salt Tax being such an important issue right  
up to independence, this was emotive history. This was a hedge of massive  
proportions; a hedge that would have existed in the time of living people's  
grandparents. For such a hedge to have been forgotten seemed unthinkable.  
Perhaps Strachey had got it wrong. Perhaps he had been misquoted.

50 By a lucky coincidence, I had just started work as conservator of the University of  
London Library. For the first few months I was very busy, with no time to pursue  
personal interests. Also, not being a librarian, it took some time to master even  
the basics of the idiosyncratic cataloguing system. I checked the computer  
catalogue, but found nothing. It was April 1996 when I eventually found, in the  
old-fashioned card catalogue, Strachey's book, written jointly with his brother  
55 Richard, *The Finances and Public Works of India, 1869-1881*. It sounded  
comprehensive and trustworthy.

1. rajas and ranies : princes and princesses.
2. rapacity : extreme greed.

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# Entrance Examination E N G L I S H S A M P L E

*Time allowed: 1 hour 20 minutes*

## Instructions

- *You should use the booklet 'Reading Material' to answer sections A, B and C*
- *Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet*

**Sections A, B and C:** *Multiple Choice* - 25 marks : 35 minutes

**Section D:** *Expressive Writing* - 25 marks : 45 minutes

## SECTIONS A — C: 35 MINUTES

Each multiple choice question is worth 1 mark

### SECTION A

1. The books in Quinto are:
  - a) Arranged messily and often in poor condition
  - b) Arranged tidily though they are in poor condition
  - c) In a random order though in very good condition
  - d) Always falling apart and badly organized
  
2. He buys the book 'Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official' because
  - a) It cost £25
  - b) It was worth a lot of money
  - c) He liked the colour
  - d) He liked the title
  
3. The book was published
  - a) In 1992
  - b) In 1995
  - c) In 1893
  - d) In 1869
  
4. According to the narrator, first editions are
  - a) More expensive and inferior
  - b) Highly prized but inexpensive
  - c) Full of errors and cheap
  - d) Longer and more expensive
  
5. As well as being a tax inspector, Sleeman has also been
  - a) a librarian
  - b) an army officer
  - c) a tax collector
  - d) an explorer
  
6. Sleeman makes his journey through India
  - a) To write a book about it
  - b) To investigate bribes
  - c) To complete a tour of inspection
  - d) To ride elephants and horses
  
7. Sleeman travels through India
  - a) On foot
  - b) By train
  - c) By camper van
  - d) By elephant and horse

8. The narrator finds Sleeman's book fascinating mainly because
- It is about the East India Company
  - It is about elephants and horses
  - It is about customs duties
  - It contains exhilarating eyewitness accounts
9. The eyewitness accounts make India sound
- Difficult to write about
  - Peaceful and settled
  - Violent and dramatic
  - Tedious and dull
10. The customs house officers are
- Fair and kind
  - Well disciplined
  - Rude and dishonest cheats
  - Kind and welcoming to travelers
11. Why is the author surprised by the customs duties?
- The collectors were dishonest
  - People didn't normally pay taxes in India
  - They were collected inland, miles from the coast
  - They were collected during famines and battles
12. Strachey finds the system of taxes
- A civilised system
  - Something which happens in many countries
  - A cruel and disgusting system
  - Easy to manage
13. Goods are taxed as they enter
- 'British' India
  - The Princely states
  - Delhi
  - Agra
14. Why does the footnote catch the narrator's eye in particular?
- It is written by Sir John Strachey
  - It tells him about the salt duty
  - It tells him that the custom line extended from the Indus to the Mahanadi
  - It tells him that the custom line was principally an immense 2,300 mile hedge.

15. Why does a hedge across India seem so hard to imagine?
- a) It might not grow well in all places
  - b) It would not have enough water to survive
  - c) It could easily have been smashed down by bandits
  - d) The narrator can find no other historical references to this strange phenomenon.
16. Why is the narrator surprised that he can find no other reference to the hedge?
- a) Because he reads a great deal
  - b) Because Sir John Strachey is normally a reliable witness
  - c) Because people would not have forgotten their grandparents talking about such a massive hedge
  - d) Because books do not lie
17. Why was it lucky that the narrator worked at the library?
- a) It kept him busy
  - b) He learnt to use a computer catalogue
  - c) He had time on his hands
  - d) It gave him the opportunity to research the hedge.
18. Where did Sleeman finally find a reference to Strachey's book?
- a) On the computer
  - b) In the old — fashioned card catalogue
  - c) In his brother Richard's book
  - d) On a desk in the library.

## **SECTION B**

Answer these questions about the meaning of words or phrases as they are used in this extract.

19. What is the closest definition to the word 'dilapidated'? (line 3)
- a) Colourful
  - b) Old and falling apart
  - c) Very ancient
  - d) Wet and smudged
20. What is the closest definition to the word 'caravan'? (line 26)
- a) Circus
  - b) Steam engine
  - c) Long line of pack animals
  - d) Herd

21. What is the closest meaning to 'famine'? (line 22)

- a) Disease
- b) Massacre
- c) Starvation
- d) Attack

22. What is the closest meaning to 'comprehensive'? (line 56)

- a) Uninteresting
- b) Short
- c) Reliable
- d) Thorough

### **SECTION C**

Answer the following questions about these words and phrases.

23. The following are what type of words?

Fascinating cheap interesting rare

- a) Nouns
- b) Adjectives
- c) Verbs
- d) Adverbs

24. Which of these lines from the extract includes a metaphor?

- a) In the heart of India (line 29)
- b) I checked the usual histories of India (line 43)
- c) These reflections were made (line 25)
- d) This was a hedge of massive proportions (lines 45-46)

25. Which of these words from the extract is a verb?

It told of the author's trek across central India.

A                      B                      C                      D

**At the end of 35 minutes you will be given Section D, Expressive Writing**



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LATYMER



ENGLISH  
Section D: Expressive Writing  
SAMPLE

*Time allowed: 45 minutes*

**Section D: EXPRESSIVE WRITING**

**Spend 45 Minutes on this section.**

This part of the examination is worth 25 marks.

Try to use interesting and imaginative vocabulary.

Don't forget to check your grammar, spelling, punctuation and paragraphing.

You should write 1-2 sides.

***Imagine that you go into a shop and discover something unexpected.  
Write about this discovery and what happens next.***



